



# CITY OF BRAWLEY

PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
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January 4, 2007

HOUSING POLICY  
DEVELOPMENT, HCD

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
400 Main Street  
Brawley, CA 92227

FEB 05 2007

Subject: Annual Planning Report and Status of the General Plan for the Year 2006

Dear Council Members:

California planning law requires that each City prepare an annual report to its legislative body on the status of the General Plan and progress in its implementation. The Planning Department herewith respectfully submits the 2006 Annual Report and the Status of the General Plan.

The purpose of the report is to ensure that the General Plan directs all land use decisions and remains an effective guide for future development. The report is also used to provide the City Council and Planning Commission with information regarding implementation of the General Plan. The Planning Department is currently in the process of updating the General Plan with adoption anticipated sometime in late 2007. I encourage full participation by the City Council, the Planning Commission, all City departments, and most importantly the citizens of Brawley.

The annual report also explains the status of the plan and progress in its implementation, including the progress in meeting the City's share of regional housing needs determined pursuant to Section 65584 of the Government Code and the City's efforts to remove constraints to the maintenance, improvement, and development of housing pursuant to Paragraph (3) of Subdivision (c) of Section 65583 of the Government Code.

Please call 344-8822 for further information or if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Gordon R. Gaste, AICP  
Planning Director

cc: Office of Planning and Research  
Department of Housing and Community Development  
Planning Commission  
City Manager  
City Clerk  
Department Heads

CY 2006

**CITY OF BRAWLEY**  
**ANNUAL PLANNING REPORT**  
**AND**  
**STATUS OF THE GENERAL PLAN**  
**2006**

**Submitted To:**

City of Brawley City Council  
400 Main Street  
Brawley, California 92227

City of Brawley Planning Commission  
400 Main Street  
Suite 3  
Brawley, California 92227

Governor's Office of Planning and Research  
State Clearinghouse and Planning Unit  
P.O. Box 3044  
Sacramento, California 95812-3044

Department of Housing and Community Development  
Housing Policy Division  
1800 Third Street, Room 430  
Sacramento, California 95814

**Prepared By:**

City of Brawley Planning Department  
400 Main Street  
Suite 3  
Brawley, California 92227

**Date Submitted:**

January 20, 2007

## **2006 Annual Planning Report and Status of the General Plan**

- I. Executive Summary
- II. City of Brawley Overview
- III. City Council Role and Responsibility
- IV. Planning Commission Role and Responsibility
- V. Development Review Committee
- VI. Planning Department Role and Responsibility
- VII. Land Use Permits
- VIII. General Plan Update

## **I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The annual planning report and status of the General Plan for the calendar year 2006 is hereby submitted to the City of Brawley City Council, Planning Commission, and State Office of Planning and Research (OPR).

During the 2006 Calendar Year, the staff, the Planning Commission, and the City Council addressed a variety of challenging and progressive land-use related projects and/or issues. Unprecedented growth is still occurring in the City, however applications for new residential entitlements has slowed somewhat. Following the major influx of residential projects, commercial development is on the rise.

As Director of the Planning Department, I sincerely thank the City Council and the Planning Commission for their assistance and support in my fifth full year with the City of Brawley. A sincere thank you is also given to the staff of the Planning Department, Building Department, and Public Works Department for their coordination and assistance in carrying out the year's projects. A particular thank you is also given to the members of the Development Review Committee (DRC) for working with the Planning Department on all the projects listed herein.

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Gordon R. Gaste, AICP  
Planning Director

## **II. CITY OF BRAWLEY OVERVIEW**

The City of Brawley, incorporated April 6, 1908, is located in the southeast corner of the state of California, in the agriculturally rich Imperial Valley.

Brawley is located 210 miles southeast of Los Angeles, 290 miles southwest of Las Vegas, Nevada, 120 miles east of San Diego, 60 miles west of Yuma, Arizona, and 23 miles north of Mexicali, Baja California, Mexico.

Brawley's climate is characterized as arid with hot summers and mild winters. The City lies 113 feet below sea level and receives approximately 3 inches of rain per year. The average annual temperature is 73.2 degrees. Brawley also has more days of sunshine per year than San Diego making the area ideal for outdoor recreation.

Brawley's 2005 census population figures estimate 25,216 residents. The City encompasses 7.538 square miles giving the city a population density of 3,345 persons per square mile.

### **III. CITY COUNCIL ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY**

The City of Brawley is a General Law City operating under the laws of the State of California. There are five (5) Council members elected at large who serve four-year terms. This Council is the community legislative body. It sets policy, approves the budget, and determines tax rates.

#### 2006 Brawley City Council

Don C. Campbell (Mayor)

Toni C. Carrillo

John Benson

M. Jo Shields

Steve Vasquez

#### **IV. PLANNING COMMISSION ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY**

California Government Code, Section 65101, authorizes the creation of a Planning Commission by the City Council. The Planning Commission consists of seven (7) members, appointed by City Council for a term of four years.

One of the Planning Commission's primary roles is to prepare, and recommend to the City Council, a comprehensive, long-term general plan for the physical development of the City. The Planning Commission also rules on matters from individual citizens pertaining to the enforcement of zoning.

##### 2006 Brawley Planning Commission

Ernest Dean (Chairman)

R.C. Valenzuela

Eugene Bumbera

Tony Gallegos

Robert L. Noriega

Thomas Rutherford

James Stiff

## **V. DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY**

The Development Review Committee (DRC) is a decision-making body that consists of seven (7) voting members representing the following departments:

- Planning
- Building Department
- Community & Economic Development Department
- Public Works
- Police
- Fire
- Parks and Recreation

The Committee also consists of twelve (12) advisory members representing the following departments/agencies:

- Finance
- Personnel/Risk Management
- Library
- Water and Wastewater
- Imperial Irrigation District
- Southern California Gas Company
- Time/Warner Communications
- SBC
- Brawley High School District
- Brawley Elementary School District
- Brawley Airport Advisory Commission
- CALTRANS
- County of Imperial (LAFCO/ALUC/Planning)

The Department Heads serve on the committee or may choose alternates to represent their departments.

The role of the DRC is to make decisions on projects subject to CEQA and projects requiring close coordination with other agencies. It also approves site plans not requiring a zone change, general plan amendment, conditional use permit, or variance.

## **VI. PLANNING DEPARTMENT ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY**

Planning is an approach to problem solving, a process to formulate future plans and ordinances, ensuring full public participation, and providing all advisory bodies (e.g., Planning Commission) and the legislative body (City Council) with the necessary information to make intelligent and informed decisions.

Through the California Constitution, the State has delegated the responsibility of implementing local policies and development to each City through the City General Plan.

Some of the specific functions of the Planning Department are to revise the General Plan, made up of seven (7) mandatory elements and one (1) optional element, review of specific plans, amending the General Plan, keeping the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances current through amendments thereto, handling Conditional Use Permits, Specific Plans, Zone Changes, Variances, Major/Minor Subdivisions (Tract Maps/Parcel Maps), Site Plans, Adjustment Plats (Lot Line Adjustments, Lot Mergers) and Certificates of Compliance among others. The Planning Department also works with other city departments providing administrative and technical assistance with their projects.

One of the necessary functions of the review for any project submitted to the Planning Department is the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) application. Through the preparation of an "Initial Study", the City determines whether or not a particular project may create a significant impact on the environment.

Policies of the General Plan and City Ordinances must be consistently applied across the board without regard as to who the applicant is and what the project may be.

### Planning Department Staff

Gordon R. Gaste, AICP, Planning Director  
Cresencia Ibarra, Administrative Secretary

## VII. LAND USE PERMITS

The City of Brawley processed a significant amount of land use applications. The last five years have seen a considerable increase in the number of projects. However, this year is the first time in five years there have been less applications than in the previous years.

Below are brief definitions of the various permits, standard procedures, and the number of permits processed during the 2006 Calendar Year. The definitions are not comprehensive; therefore, they should only be used as a reference.

**Subdivision:** Generally, a subdivision is any division of land for the purpose of sale, lease, or financing and is governed by the State Subdivision Map Act (Government Code, Section 66410).

**Major Subdivision:** With a few exceptions, a major subdivision is the division of five or more lots. During the 2006 Calendar Year, the Planning Department processed 6 Major Subdivision applications.

**Minor Subdivision:** A minor subdivision consisting of four or fewer parcels that requires a parcel map. During the 2006 Calendar Year, the Planning Department processed 3 Minor Subdivision applications.

**Zone Change:** Zoning is a state-mandated requirement and all properties within the City are classified into various zones or "zoning districts." Zoning regulations establish groups of permitted uses that vary from district to district. If a property owner desires to conduct a land use upon his property that is not permitted in the existing zoning district, he or she may apply for a Zone Change. During the 2006 Calendar Year, the Planning Department processed 1 Zone Change application.

**Conditional Use Permit:** A procedure established whereby an applicant can request a certain land use to be permitted in an area in which it is not usually permitted by the Zoning Ordinance, and where such uses are deemed essential or desirable to the public convenience and welfare, and are compatible with the various elements or objectives of the General Plan. During the 2006 Calendar Year, the Planning Department processed 5 Conditional Use Permit applications.

**Variance:** A procedure established by State Law and the Ordinances of the City of Brawley whereby an applicant can request a deviation from the provisions of the minimum property development standards established relating to building height, lot area, structural coverage, building set backs, or accessory structures (e.g., carports, signs). During the 2006 Calendar Year, the Planning Department processed 9 Variance applications.

**Adjustment Plat:** Lot Line Adjustment and Lot Merger. These are required to adjust property lines between adjacent parcels when no new parcels are created. During the 2006 Calendar Year, the Planning Department processed 6 Adjustment Plat applications.

**General Plan Amendment:** During the 2006 Calendar Year, the Planning Department processed 1 General Plan Amendment application.

**Site Plan Review:** A procedure for review of site-specific requirements for a project. A site plan review may be an ordained requirement or mandated by a condition of approval. During the 2006 Calendar Year, the Planning Department processed 12 Site Plan Review applications.

Cumulatively, the Planning Department processed 43 land use permit applications for the 2006 Calendar Year. This is still a significant number considering the size of the City and growth continues. Although other cities of comparable size typically have a staff of four to six for their Planning Departments, all applications have been processed within the timelines required by law with a staff of only two.

## **VIII. THE GENERAL PLAN UPDATE**

The City of Brawley, in 1995, prepared a revised General Plan that serves to guide future development. The Housing Element was updated in 2001 and is being implemented to achieve the regional housing needs.

The objective of the General Plan is to promote orderly growth and development and to maintain and improve the kind of environment that makes Brawley an excellent place to live, work, and enjoy leisure time. The General Plan contains information on the physical, economic, and social environment of Brawley.

The California Government Code requires that the plan be long-term, clearly written, comprehensive, and the policies of the plan must be internally consistent.

The City of Brawley General Plan is an official statement by the City Council. It can be viewed as the constitution for the City's physical development, for the protection of the environment, and for the enhancement of the quality of life in Brawley. It is used by the Planning Commission and City Council to support their decisions on major land use, zoning, and future public/private projects. The General Plan policies and programs shall also provide information and guidance to the general public. In context, the General Plan addresses the following mandatory plans and other optional elements:

- Land Use Element
- Infrastructure Element
- Resource Management Element
- Open Space/Recreation Element
- Public Safety/Noise Element
- Economic Development Element
- Housing Element
- Implementation Element

The General Plan is currently being revised with adoption expected sometime in late 2007.

The City's new Service Area Plan (SAP) and Sphere of Influence (SOI) were adopted by the Imperial County Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCO) on December 14, 2006.

## **HOUSING ELEMENT PROGRESS**

See Attachment "A" for the Housing Element progress. Please note our Housing Element can not be updated until the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) releases the needs list.

**Annual Progress Report<sup>1</sup>  
on Implementation of the Housing Element  
General Plan Report requirement pursuant to  
Section 65400 of the Government Code**

Government Code Section 65400(b)(1) mandates that all cities and counties submit to their legislative bodies an annual report on the status of the housing element and progress in its implementation (the "Progress Report"). Only charter cities are exempt from the requirement to prepare Progress Reports, pursuant to Government Code Section 65700. However, a charter city may have elected to include the annual progress report as one of its goals and objectives in their most recent housing element. A copy of this Progress Report must also be sent to the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) and the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).

Jurisdiction: **City of Brawley**

Address: **400 Main Street  
Brawley, CA 92227**

Contact **Terri Nava**

Phone: **760-344-8622**

**Report Period: July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006**

**A. Progress in meeting Regional Housing Need.**

1998-2005 RHNA – New Construction Need

Income Group	RHNA	New Construction Units Permitted 1-1-05 – 12-31-05*	New Construction Units Permitted 1-1-98 – 12-31-05*	Remaining New Construction Needed
Very Low	322	0	192	130
Low	173	2	209	0
Moderate	227	20	151	76
Above Moderate	417	165	499	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,139</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>1,051</b>	<b>206</b>

\*Information unavailable for 1-1-06 to 6-30-06.

<sup>1</sup> Suitable for submission for Workforce Housing Program and to meet HCD Annual Report Requirements

**B. The effectiveness of the housing element in attainment of the community's housing goals and objectives.**

**Housing Programs**

**7.1. Actions in support of housing availability and production.**

<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>TIMING RESPONSIBLE AGENCY</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
<b>A.)</b> Continue to provide adequate sites to accommodate the City's Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) of 1,139 units as determined by SCAG for the 1998-2005 housing element period. Ensure that the residential sites have appropriate densities to accommodate the housing needs of 322 very low income households, 173 low income households, 227 moderate income households, and 417 above moderate income households.	2000-2005  Planning Department	The City has plenty of vacant land that can be used for residential development, to meet the RHNA. So far it has been unnecessary for the City to market to developers, as development has been steady.  The City was awarded a HOME grant to be allocated in 2007 to build 87 affordable multifamily and 12 affordable single-family units.
<b>B.)</b> Continue to offer a reduction in development fees and a relaxation of development standards to stimulate the more intensive use of vacant residential land within walking distance of downtown Brawley.	2000-2005  Planning Department	The City offers parking variances, a development standard relaxation, for projects that are being developed in the downtown area.
<b>C.)</b> Continue to conditionally allow residences above or to the rear of ground floor of commercial uses in the downtown area. (Mixed use developments are conditionally permitted in Neighborhood Commercial (C-1) and Service and Professional (C-P) districts).	2000-2005  Planning Department	The City's General Plan will be updated in late 2007. At that time, the zoning ordinances will be reviewed and revised. At this time the City does allow mixed use projects in the downtown area with a Conditional Use Permit.
<b>D.)</b> On an annual basis, update the inventory of vacant land suitable for residential development and make it available to housing developers.	2000-2005  Planning Department	The City is currently applying for a Planning and Technical Assistance application to fund a vacant land survey to be completed in 2007.

E.) Revise the Zoning Ordinance to specifically identify in which zones transitional housing and homeless shelters are allowed. Adopt Zoning Ordinance revisions by the end of fiscal year 2002. (See Program 7.4D in the Housing Element for discussion of transitional housing and homeless shelters.)	2000-2005  Planning Department	The City's General Plan will be updated in late 2007. At that time the zoning ordinances will be reviewed and revised.
F.) Continue to use environmental and other development review procedures to ensure that all new residential development is provided with adequate public services and facilities. Documentation that affirm adequate services and facilities are or will be provided shall be a condition of project approval.	2000-2005  Planning Department	The City is continuing to use environmental and developmental review procedures. Information on services for any given site is available for developers seeking to build.

## 7.2. Actions in support of housing conservation and improvement.

PROGRAM	TIMING  RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	STATUS
A.) Rehabilitate 12 units per year (2 moderate income, 4 low income, 6 very low income), or 60 units by 2005.	2000-2005  Housing Programs Office	Between 2000 and 2005, 49 units were rehabilitated, and 11 more units have been completed in 2006.
B.) Continue to allow for the construction of additional bedrooms with financial assistance from the City's residential rehabilitation program when the need to eliminate overcrowding can be demonstrated.	2000-2005  Housing Programs Office	The City has continued to allow, under the residential rehabilitation program, the ability to expand homes to stop overcrowding.
C.) Continue to enforce and expand existing code enforcement efforts. Eliminate and replace 5 dilapidated/substandard units a year or 25 dilapidated/substandard units by 2005. Provide relocation assistance and replacement housing consistent with state and federal regulations should lower and moderate income households be displaced (see Program 7.2F in the Housing Element).	2000-2005  Planning and Building Departments	Between 2000 and 2005 25 units were replaced or eliminated. The City has procedures in place to relocate residents in the case of a complete reconstruction or for health and safety reasons, such as the existence of mold or lead base paint removal.

<b>D.)</b> Continue to provide program information and technical assistance to local property owners regarding housing maintenance.	2000-2005  Planning and Building Departments, Housing Programs Office	The City sits on committees and works with, and is in constant communication with, the Imperial Valley Housing Authority. Homeowners are referred to the City's programs by various non-profit groups and government agencies such as the Imperial Valley Agency on Aging.
<b>E.)</b> Continue to use the Zoning Ordinance and other land use controls to ensure the compatibility of residential areas with surrounding land uses and to protect existing residential areas from incompatible uses.	2000-2005  Planning Department	The City has continued to use zoning ordinances to create compatible residential areas. At this time there have been no complaints.
<b>F.)</b> Continue to avoid the displacement of residents when carrying out CDBG and redevelopment-funded activities and whenever necessary, provide appropriate relocation assistance.	2000-2005  Housing Programs Office	The City has procedures in place should a CDBG or HOME rehabilitation applicant need to be relocated.

### 7.3. Actions in support of energy conservation.

<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>TIMING</b>  <b>RESPONSIBLE AGENCY</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
<b>A.)</b> Continue to use the development review process to require that all new residential development comply with the energy conservation requirements of Title 24 of the California Administrative Code. Encourage the use of new building and site design techniques that reduce energy consumption.	2000-2005  Planning and Building Departments	The City has a development requirement that, prior to permitting, developers and contractors must submit a report to show that they will comply with Title 24.
<b>B.)</b> Continue to allow energy conservation measures as improvements eligible under the City's residential rehabilitation program.	2000-2005  Planning and Building Departments	The City has a development requirement that, prior to permitting, developers and contractors must submit a report to show that they will comply with energy conservation measures.
<b>C.)</b> Continue to assist in distributing information regarding free energy audits provided by the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) and weatherization services provided by Campesinos Unidos.	2000-2005  Planning Department, IID and Campesinos Unidos	The City has made information available through flyers and the Community Development Department, as well as postings on public bulletin boards, such as the library.

#### 7.4. Actions in support of equal housing opportunity.

PROGRAM	TIMING  RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	STATUS
A.) The City will continue to refer fair housing complaints to California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA) or to the Civil Rights Division of HUD as appropriate. The City will assist in program outreach through placement of CRLA and HUD program brochures in both English and Spanish at the public counter, City library, post office, and other community locations such as Laundromats and community bulletin boards. The City will also adopt a policy by the end of fiscal year 2001 to post public notices at strategic locations advising the public that the City does business in accordance with Federal Fair Housing Law (The Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988).	2000-2005  Housing Programs Office	The City has not had any complaints to be referred. However, procedures are in place should a complaint arise.
B.) Continue to allow the removal of architectural barriers as an eligible activity under the City's residential rehabilitation program.	2000-2005  Housing Programs Office	The City has continued to allow the removal of architectural barriers, such as making a unit ADA compliant.
C.) Enforce the State of California handicap accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) that apply to all new multifamily residential projects of three or more units.	2000-2005	All designs for multifamily units must meet ADA requirements prior to permitting.
D.) Revise the Zoning Ordinance by the end of 2002 to clarify that state-licensed residential care facilities that serve six or fewer persons are allowed by right in all residential zones (R-A, R-E, R-1, R-2, R-3, MHS and MHP). Revise the Zoning Ordinance by the end of 2002 to conditionally allow residential care facilities, transitional housing, and emergency shelters that serve transitional housing, and emergency shelters that serve more than six persons in appropriate zones (R-2, R-3, C-P, and C-1).	December 2002	The City's General Plan will be updated in late 2007. At that time the zoning ordinances will be reviewed and revised. At this time there are no prohibitions to building a residential care facility in all residential zones.

## 7.5. Actions in support of removing constraints

PROGRAM	TIMING  RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	STATUS
A.) Biennially review the zoning ordinance (i.e., in 2002 and 2004 for this planning period) for possible amendments to the zoning code, including amendments to the residential development standards and the parking requirements, to reduce housing costs without sacrificing basic health and safety considerations.	2002 2004  Planning Department	Zoning ordinances are reviewed monthly, and all reviews and revisions will be considered when the General Plan is updated in 2007.
B.) Continually review the performance of local lending institutions with regard to the HOME Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) and the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA). Discuss with lenders when potential problems are identified. Lenders wishing to participate in City programs should have satisfactory performance in CRA lending.	2000-2005	The City has a 30 day procedure to review the performance of local lend institutions to ensure they are in good standing.
C.) Biennially review, (i.e., in 2002 and 2004 for this planning period) development fees in other cities in Imperial County to ensure that Brawley's fees are reasonable.	2002 2004	The City is constantly surveying surrounding communities to ensure their fees are reasonable. The last change to development fees occurred in 2002.
D.) Continue to allocate funds to defray the cost of land and/or off-site improvements for lower-income housing projects.	2000-2005	The City continues to use CDBG and Program Income to defray the cost of development standards for lower-income housing.

## 7.6. Actions is support of housing affordability

PROGRAM	TIMING  RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	STATUS
A.) The City will continue to support affordable rental and homeownership opportunities through the key federal programs provided on pages 75 and 76 of the Housing Element. On an annual basis between 2000 and 2005, the City will pursue additional funding sources for affordable housing development and preservation.	2000-2005  Planning Department, Housing Programs Office, Building Department	Between 2000 and 2005 the City was awarded \$3.5 million in CDBG, \$1.5 million in HOME, and \$500,000 in CalHOME funds.
B.) Continue to consider the use of innovative land use techniques and construction methods (e.g., clustering of units, density transfers, zero lot line development, and relaxed development standards and parking requirements) to minimize housing development costs.	2001-2006  Planning Department	The City has considered innovative land use techniques such as zero lot line development and higher density bonuses to minimize development costs.
C.) Continue to inform private developers of the below market interest rate mortgage programs operated by the California Housing Finance Agency (CHFA) and direct interested developers to CHFA, as a means to facilitate construction of new, affordable housing for moderate income households.	200-2005  Housing Programs Office	Approximately 4-5 developers per year request information about programs to promote affordable housing. Those developers are given information about programs run by CalHFA and are directed to that agency.
D.) Coordinate with prospective developers to pursue tax credits to fund the construction of multi-family rental units in the City.	2000-2005  Planning Department, Housing Programs Office, Private Developers	The City is now located within an Enterprise Zone. The City does offer density bonuses based on the State sliding scale for developers of multi-family rental units in the City.
E.) Continue to support the efforts of non-profit organizations and the Imperial Valley Housing Authority to obtain state and federal funds for the construction of affordable housing for lower income households. When appropriate projects/programs are identified, the City will assist the developers in pursuing state and federal funds through letters of support, documentation of need, and /or funding commitment.	2000-2005  Economic and Community Development Department, Housing Programs Office	The City has continued to support the efforts of non-profit groups to assist in applying for state funds, specifically for special needs projects under the SB146.

## 7.7. Actions in support of preserving affordable housing

PROGRAM	TIMING  RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	STATUS
A.) Continue to pursue the use of local and State funds to preserve lower income housing opportunities in the City's mobile home parks.	2000-2005  Housing Programs Office	The City has applied for and received CDBG rehabilitation monies that continue to assist in preserving the City's mobile home parks.
B.) Support Imperial Valley Housing Authority's attempts to secure additional Section 8 rental assistance for Brawley residents through letters of support and documentation of need. Encourage rental property owners to accept Section 8 vouchers.	2000-2005  Imperial Valley Housing Authority	The City of Brawley works cohesively with the IVHA to make every attempt to secure additional Section 8 rental assistance.
C.) The City will assist the Imperial Valley Housing Authority in conserving the 274 existing units that are at-risk of converting to market-rate housing or losing its rental subsidies in the Housing Element cycle. The City will monitor the units at risk, provide tenant education, and work with potential priority purchasers as described on pages 78 and 79 of the Housing Element.	2000-2005  Planning Department / IVHA	The City of Brawley continues to work with IVHA to ensure existing units are conserved for low income renters. The IVHA is a member of the California Affordable Housing Authority, this authority acts as a conduit to issue bonds for purchase of affordable housing units.

**C. Progress toward mitigating constraints identified in the housing element.**

Identified Non-Governmental Constraint	Mitigation Progress
<p>1) Land Availability and Environmental Constraints:</p> <p>The most significant natural resources in Brawley are associated with the New River, which flows from the southwest to the northeast across the Planning Area. The river's riparian habitat supports a variety of wildlife and the bluffs provide topographical relief from the flat valley. The area near the New River is also subject to flooding. In addition, significant archeological resources associated with the Kumeyaay culture potentially occur along the undeveloped banks of the New River and on terraces overlooking the river corridor. For these reasons, most of the New River corridor is designated as Open Space in the Brawley General Plan and is not targeted for housing development.</p>	<p>To prevent the destruction of important archaeological resources, the City requires a site inspection by a professional archaeologist during the development review process for all projects located in an area known to have a potential for archaeological resources.</p> <p>Undeveloped residentially zoned land within the City of Brawley will more than adequately meet local housing needs over the course of the Housing Element, even when all environmental constraints are considered.</p>
<p>2) Land Cost:</p> <p>The cost of developable land has a direct impact on the cost of a new home, making it a potential non-governmental constraint. According to developers currently constructing residential units in Brawley, the cost of a typical developable residential lot (i.e. approximately 7,200 square feet finished lot with infrastructure in place) is approximately \$20,000 to \$25,000. The price of land in the City, as in adjacent communities, may pose a constraint to the development of affordable housing.</p>	<p>To help offset the cost of land the City offers density bonuses to developers.</p>
<p>3) Construction Costs:</p> <p>The costs for labor and materials have a direct impact on the cost of housing and are a primary component of housing cost. Building materials typically comprise between 40 and 50 percent of the sales price of a home. According to the Construction Industry Research Board, construction costs for wood frame, single family homes of average to good quality range from \$60 to \$80 per square foot. Custom units and homes with extra amenities run substantially higher. Costs for wood frame, multi-family construction average around \$42 per square foot, exclusive of parking.</p>	<p>Lower housing costs can be achieved with:</p> <p>a) reduction in amenities and quality of building materials (above a minimum acceptable standard for health, safety, and adequate performance); b) use of manufactured housing (including both mobile homes and modular housing); and c) increase number of units in a development to reduce overall development costs based on economies of scale.</p>
<p>4) Financing</p> <p>Interest rates have a substantial impact on housing costs, either experienced by renters as costs passed on through rents, by purchasers through their mortgage payments, or by developers through the construction and long-term financing for the development.</p>	<p>The City continues to offer assistance and information for developers on various ways to cut costs, to offset rising interest rates.</p>